The Vazquez Family Statement

May 21, 2026

Over the last several days, our family has been trying to process the horrific actions carried out by our son against the Islamic Center San Diego Community. We want to begin by acknowledging that nothing we say or do could ever repair the damage his actions have caused. We are completely heartbroken and devastated by what has happened. We condemn these hateful and violent actions entirely.

As much as we mourn the child we raised and love, we mourn even more deeply for the innocent lives of Amin Abdullah, Mansour Kaziha, and Nadir Awad. We honor and thank them for their heroic actions that day, which prevented the loss of even more innocent lives. Our hearts and prayers are with each of their families during this unimaginably tragic time.

The pain inflicted upon this community is immeasurable. Lives have been shattered forever. Families now carry an emptiness that can never truly be filled, and an entire community has had its sense of peace, safety, and trust violently taken from them. We stand with you, with the community, and with the Muslim community as a whole. No statement can undo that pain, and no apology could ever be enough.

We would also like to extend our apology to the landscaper, senselessly targeted. We are grateful that the attempts to harm you were unsuccessful, and our hearts remain with you as well.

We want to be very clear, an attack rooted in hatred against people because of their faith is an attack against the dignity and humanity of every person. We reject hatred, extremism, bigotry, and violence in every form. We stand firmly against the ideology and actions that led to this tragedy. These actions do not reflect the values we raised our family with or the beliefs we hold in our hearts.

We would also like to make clear that our son’s ideologies do not align with our morals or principles as a family. Coming from a diverse family that not only includes immigrants but Muslims as well, we always taught the importance of acceptance, compassion, and love for one another. We are proud of the different backgrounds, cultures, ethnicities, and religions within our

family and community. We raised our children to treat every person with dignity, kindness, and compassion. The only difference we have ever believed truly separates people is the actions they choose to put into the world during their lifetime.

Our son was on the autism spectrum, and it is painfully clear to us now that he struggled not only with accepting parts of his own identity but also grew to resent them. We believe this, combined with exposure to hateful rhetoric, extremist content, and propaganda spread across parts of the internet, social media, and other online platforms, contributed to his descent into radicalized ideologies and violent beliefs. While there is no excuse for his actions, we have come to recognize how dangerous online spaces are that normalize hatred.

Although measures were taken to help him through his mental instability, it ultimately was not enough. We repeatedly encouraged him to seek help, and he voluntarily spent time in multiple rehabilitation centers. We tried to place him in environments and around people who could provide the support and treatment he needed. We will forever live with the burden of wondering whether there was more we could have done to help prevent this senseless tragedy.

To others who may share similar extremist ideologies or hateful beliefs, we say this, hate has no place in America, a country built by people from different ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds seeking a better life. To anyone struggling with violent thoughts, anger, radicalization, or hatred toward others, please seek help before more innocent lives are destroyed. Talk to someone you trust. Reach out to family, faith leaders, counselors, or mental health professionals. Do not allow anger, isolation, propaganda, or hatred to grow into violence and terror. Nothing is worth causing this kind of irreversible pain to innocent people, families, and entire communities.

As parents, we are grieving in ways we never imagined possible. But our pain does not compare to the suffering of the victims and their families. This moment is not about us. It is about the innocent people whose lives were taken, the survivors whose lives have been forever changed, and a grieving community trying to heal from unimaginable trauma.

To the families who lost loved ones, we are deeply sorry for the pain and devastation caused. We know there may never be forgiveness, and we understand that. We simply want to acknowledge

your grief, honor the lives that were lost, and say that we mourn alongside you with broken hearts.

We can only pray that his actions and words do not inspire or incite further hatred or violence toward any community. They were the actions of an immensely lost, troubled, and misguided soul, and we hope no other family or community ever has to endure this kind of tragedy again.

The Vazquez Family